

Message Text

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73

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-10 AID-05

COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03 CIEP-01

LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 435

DIA WASHDC

INFO USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

AMCONSUL DOUALA

AMCONSUL KADUNA

AMCONSUL IBADAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 7254

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PINS, PINT, NI

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN COUP - NEW LEADER FMG ADDRESSES NATION

1. BRIGADIER MURTALA MOHAMMED ADDRESSED NATION AS SCHEDULED AND BLAMED LACK OF CONSULTATION, INEFFICIENCY, AND PUBLIC DISILLUSIONMENT FOR CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP. SAID PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION HAD NEGLECTED ARMED FORCES AND HAD BECOME INACCESSIBLE AND ISOLATED. MOHAMMED CONFIRMED REMOVAL OF GOWAN AND ANNOUNCED
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HIS IMMEDIATE RETIREMENT WITH FULL BENEFITS. MOHAMMED ALSO

ANNOUNCED RELIEF AND RETIREMENT WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT OF MILITARY HIERARCHY AND ALL OFFICIALS OF RANK OF MAJOR GENERAL OR ITS EQUIVALENT AND ABOVE, ALL MILITARY GOVERNORS AND ADMINISTRATOR OF EAST CENTRAL STATE, AND IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL OF ALL FEDERAL COMMISSIONERS. HE NAMED 22-MEMBER NEW SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL, AND GOVERNORS OF STATES (NAMES FOLLOW SEPTTEL). MOHAMMED SAID NEW FEDERAL COMMISSIONERS WOULD BE NAMED SHORTLY. HE ALSO NAMED NEW COMMANDERS FOR NIGERIA'S FOUR ARMY DIVISIONS.

2. MOHAMMED ANNOUNCED THAT THERE WOULD BE PANELS SET UP FOR STUDY OF QUESTIONS OF CREATION OF NEW STATES AND LOCATION OF FEDERAL CAPITOL. BECAUSE WHATEVER FIGURES ANNOUNCED WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTED BY NIGERIAN PEOPLE, HE CANCELLED 1973 CENSUS RESULTS AND SAID FOR PLANNING PURPOSES GOVERNMENT WILL USE 1963 CENSUS.

3. MOHAMMED ANNOUNCED POSTPONEMENT OF FESTAC; SAID NEW DATE WOULD BE SET IN CONSULTATION WITH OTHER COUNTRIES AND SPONSORS OF EVENT.

4. MOHAMMED SAID NEW GOVERNMENT WISHED TO BE FRIENDS WITH ALL COUNTRIES. HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD PROTECT FOREIGN NATIONALS RESIDENT IN NIGERIA AND FOREIGN CAPITAL INVESTMENT.

HE SAID HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD HONOR ALL OBLIGATIONS ENTERED INTO BY PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT, AND WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT OAU, UN AND COMMONWEALTH.

5. MOHAMMED ANNOUNCED NEW STRUCTURE OF GOVERNMENT WOULD INCLUDE THREE ORGANS AT FEDERAL LEVEL: SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL, NATIONAL COUNCIL OF STATES, AND FEDERAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (NAMES FOLLOW SEPTTEL).

6. MOHAMMED CONCLUDED SPEECH BY SAYING HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT TOLERATE INDISCIPLINE, INEFFICIENCY, OR ABUSE OF OFFICE.

7. COMMENT: MOHAMMED'S ADDRESS WAS CLEAR AND WELL-ORGANIZED, AND HE SPOKE CALMLY AND WITH ASSURANCE. HE GAVE THE IMPRESSION OF A NEW LEADER IN CHARGE OF EVENTS AND TAKING WHAT
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BOLD STEPS HE FEELS NECESSARY TO EFFECT THE CHANGES HE SEES REQUIRED TO ARREST THE "INDISCIPLINE AND NEGLECT" OF THE GOWON REGIME AND TO "AVOID BLOODSHED" IN NIGERIA. MOHAMMED HAS CLEARLY STRUCK THE POSE OF A REFORM LEADER ATTEMPTING TO HALT THE NATION'S "PLUNGE TOWARD CHAOS."
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